

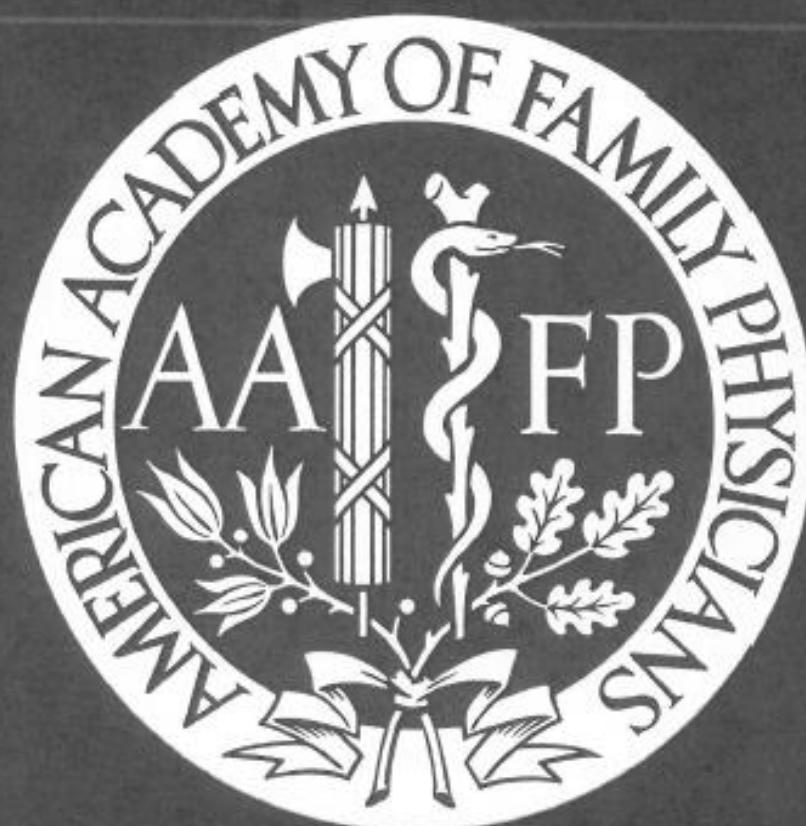
GP PRESS

Amigos
P. 15

Vol. XXII

November-December, 1971

No. 6



PUBLISHED BY THE TEXAS ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

Medical Charity

New, Rewarding Horizons

J.T.L. McNew, M.D.

Chairman,

TAFP Legislature and Public Policy

Many are the charity hours spent by GPs of Texas and minor is the credit received for giving those hours. Obviously medical ethics keep your names out of the news-paper, off t.v. or the radio; but, there is no good reason why General Practitioners as a group shouldn't be publicized for all those charity hours. Just a few of the categories where you freely give without compensation are: football physicals, team physicians, pre-natal charity clinics, family planning clinics, Head Start physicals where you turn the compensation over to a local charity, physicals for community day-care centers for the indigent, short-term medical missions, and even foreign mission fill-in work.

As most of you know our Physician for the Legislature Program reaped us good public relations and publicity. No one guy got the credit but the Academy and Texas General Practitioners received much favorable p.r. This was a big undertaking for the Academy and it meant out-of-pocket expenses for GPs who manned the station each day, but it did bring us a fantastic amount of publicity and good will.

This year it is the hope and dream of the Public Relations committee of the Texas Academy of Family Physicians to publicize the activities of its members both in their home-town paper and through more widely spread news media by telling of the multitude of activities and services that Academy members perform and seldom or never get credit for. We hope to do this within the guidelines of good medical ethics and without emphasizing physicians' names, but just the fact that they are members of the Academy and involved in treating the whole person.

Each of us has a pet scheme or area that we work in along charitable lines, but what we need to do is to get all these endeavors cataloged so that we can put out publicity which can be better and more ethically done from the Academy. This, of course, will be impossible if busy doctors won't take the time or have their secretaries or wives take the time to sit down and write it all up or pick up the phone and call to report. Our official request is write down all charitable activities, services performed without pay, or similar items, list where, what, how many people involved, the number of hours spent, and send these details to the Academy office or to me as head of Public Relations.

If you don't have time to write, pick up the phone and call. Dissemination of this information in the proper areas will probably do more to restore the image of the General Practitioner than

anything that has been done in years; but first we must have a storehouse of information. There is no question but that these services are being performed, the only question is whether we can get Academy members to take the time to let us know about them.

Now, I'm coming to you with another even larger plan and asking you men to man it. I believe that if we will undertake and fulfill the obligations I'm about to outline the amount of satisfaction each one of you receives will be more than enough compensation; and, as a bonus the public relations image our Academy would build would be without peer in the world. What I'm speaking about is Amigos Internacionales, a non-denominational Christian organization based in Athens, Texas, and their medical mission program to British Honduras. Acting unofficially as members of the Texas Academy of Family Physicians we could provide most of the physicians needed to man this program for one year. Amigos has secured permission from the government of British Honduras to go in beginning January 1972, and start full-time medical missions using short-term personnel. Temporary licensure has been obtained from the government of British Honduras and that government is not only giving us its blessing to come but is most anxious to have us since they are woefully short of physicians throughout the country. In the back country areas, where we would be working, medical care is and always has been scarce if not non-existent. The physicians in British Honduras do a fine job but there are just too few of them and they are spread too thin. Mobile clinics are now being constructed and should be in place and in working order after the first of the year; aircraft have been obtained so that people may be taken down and brought out as necessary once per week. The people of British Honduras speak English so there is no language barrier. The land is tropical and has an off-shore barrier reef second only to the Great Barrier Reef in Australia for beauty and sporting activity. For those so inclined the chance to witness to their faith in Christ through the care of others less fortunate than ourselves is here; for others the natural beauty with a Caribbean flavor is a strong drawing card.

Won't you contact me or Mr. Jim Wren at the following addresses if you would be willing to take part in this?

J. T. L. McNew, M.D.
207 Sulphur Springs Road
Bryan, Texas 77801
Telephone Area Code 713 822-4547
OR

Mr. Jim Wren
Amigos Internacionales
115 South Palestine Street
Athens, Texas 75751
Telephone Area Code 214 675-4545